

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TANANA 01320 300950Z

21

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NASA-01 L-02 SCI-03 NSC-07 NSCE-00

CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SSO-00

INRE-00 DRC-01 /048 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6532

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1320

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NASA, TSPA, MA, US

SUBJECT: NASA STATION AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 190196

1. ENGLISH AND FRENCH TEXTS OF DRAFT AGREEMENT BEING
CABLED SEPARATELY. WE ARE USING WORD "AGREEMENT"
IN ENGLISH TEXT AND "ACCORD" IN FRENCH TEXT WHICH WE BELIEVE
SHOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO ANDRIAMHAZO.

2. EMBASSY CONSIDERS IT SAFE TO ACCEPT TYPE OF AGREEMENT
PREPARED BY ANDRIAMHAZO. EMBASSY HAS BEEN STRUCK OVER
PAST FEW MONTHS AT HOW FREQUENTLY MINISTERS (BOTH MILITARY
OFFICERS AND CIVILIAN TECHNICIANS) IN DISCUSSING VARIOUS
QUESTIONS WITH EMBASSY HAVE STATED IT WILL BE NECESSARY
TO GET GENERAL RAMANANTSOA'S APPROVAL, THUS REMOVING ANY
EARLIER SUSPICION THAT RAMANANTSOA MIGHT BE FIGUREHEAD
RATHER THAN EFFECTIVE HEAD OF GOVERNMENT. SINCE WE KNOW
FROM VARIOUS TALKS WITH ANDRIAMHAZO THAT RAMANANTSOA
HAS PERSONALLY APPROVED EXTENSION NASA STATION, WE CAN
TAKE THIS AS FINAL AND TOP-LEVEL GOVERNMENT DECISION.
INCIDENTALLY, ANDRIAMHAZO COMMENTED TO ME DURING TALK ON
AUGUST 27 THAT, IF IT HAD BEEN LEFT TO HIM, NASA AGREEMENT
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PAGE 02 TANANA 01320 300950Z

WOULD HAVE BEEN SIGNED LONG AGO, THUS FURTHER INDICATING

THAT HE NOW HAS AUTHORITY TO SIGN.

3. RE PARA 4 REFTTEL: (A) THERE IS NO QUESTION IN EMBASSY'S VIEW THAT U.S. IS BETTER OFF WITH AGREEMENT OF TYPE PREPARED BY ANDRIAMAHAZO, THAN CONTINUING WITHOUT ANY AGREEMENT. AGREEMENT PROVIDES MORE SOLID BASIS FOR CONTINUED NASA OPERATION, AND WILL ENABLE BOTH SIDES TO PROCEED TO COOPERATING AGENCY ARRANGEMENT. IT ALSO CLEARS AIR BETWEEN US AND GOMR ON MAJOR ISSUE, AND ENABLES US PROCEED RAISE OTHER MAJOR MATTERS WITH GOMR.

(B) WHILE EMBASSY HAS NEVER BEEN EXPLICITLY TOLD WHAT WAS SAID WITHIN GOMR TO RATSIRAKA ON AGREEMENT, OR WHAT HIS REACTION WAS OR IS, THERE APPEARS LITTLE OR NO CHANCE THAT HE WILL CONTEST RAMANANTSOA'S DECISION. RAMANANTSOA CAN AND DOES AT TIMES TREAT HIS CABINET MINISTERS IN MILITARY FASHION AS OFFICERS JUNIOR TO HIM, AND I FEEL SURE HE WOULD BE PREPARED DO SO IF RATSIRKA FURTHER QUESTIONED DECISION. ANDRIAMAHAZO REMINDED ME SOME MONTHS AGO THAT HE ALSO IN MILITARY SUPERIOR TO RATSIRAKA, AND SEEMED INDICATE LATTER WOULD NOT CONFRONT HIM WITH DIRECT, BRUTAL MAJOR CHALLENGE.

(C) I CONSIDER ANDRIAMAHAZO'S PROPOSAL ON TYPE OF AGREEMENT AS DESIGNED TO (1) AVOID RUBBING RATSIRAKA'S NOSE INTO DIRT AND (W) REDUCE TO MINIMUM ASIAN-TYPE BACKBITING WHICH EXCHANGE NOTES IN RATSIRAKA'S ABSENCE WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO FOMENT THAN SEPARATE AGREEMENT SIGNED BY ANDRIAMAHAZO IN HIS OWN MINISTERIAL CAPACITY.
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Message Attributes

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